

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !" — Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOTHS MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT." — Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We are inclined to think that Archie Campbell's new book 'The sound of a voice that is still' (London: George Redway) is only another specimen of the sensational novel turning upon spiritualist experiences. We are afraid we shall never be reconciled to these 'works of art.' They may excite the imagination; they may accustom the stranger to the wonderland they otherwise might pass by with scorn or pity; they may teach important spiritual truths; but, as works, apparently, of mere imagination they may only breed a sort of Spiritualism run wild. We may, of course, be wrong, but that is our abiding feeling with regard to spiritualistic romances as a rule, holding, as we do, that this subject requires the discrimination and the sobriety of simple demonstrable truth.

This book is strongly imaginative, and sticks at nothing. The author's spirits live just as other people do. They have dinner parties, they flirt, they smoke, they cycle, they propose toasts, they go to bed and are particular about their clothes,—in fact, they keep house and run their lives just as we do, and in the same houses as those we live in. Is this all sheer imagination and story-telling? If so, what is the good of it? Here and there, in the book, there are serious Lectures, Essays, Criticisms on Music and Art, as well as stories of personal experience, and, from some of these, not a little may be learnt: but we are doubtful about the mode of administering the doses of goodness and truth. At the same time, we fully believe that the book would give delight to many as a story, while its reflections on life and character would be highly suggestive and edifying.

A late number of 'The Perfect Faith' (Denver, Colorado) contains a deliciously simple communication on the power of continuous thoughts of peace and hopefulness, and the mere saying to one's self 'Rest!' or 'Peace, be still!' The communication is in the form of a conversation between a teacher and her disciple. 'Have you lost the idea of the "treadmill life"?' asks the teacher. The disciple replies: 'I will own that after holding for two weeks the words you gave me, "Peace, be still," the sun did seem to shine brighter upon the world; my own home took on a different look. Now I want to tell you something strange that has come into this home in the last few days. I don't understand it. Always before this, when I came from my work, the house was desolate, the children cross and hungry, and my man the worst of all. The last few nights I have had a welcome from them. A bright

fire, the table laid for supper, and the children and father glad to see me. And, O, if it could only last!'

Then the teacher explains the underlying law of it, and shows that the new thoughts had acted as causes beyond herself, in stimulating the pleasure-centres in the brain of each member of the family. 'Now, remember,' says the teacher, 'if you want a happy home—think it into existence. If you want happy children, send happy thoughts into their minds. If you want a happy husband, fill him with happy thoughts. If you want to be happy yourself, think happy thoughts. Sound the keynote of happiness in the brain: sound it in the air as you go to and from your work: sound it in the home. Ring the happy notes like the Christmas bells.' And so on: all very homely, very obvious, very undeniable; but, in reality, belonging to 'the fountains of the great deep':—as simple as loving-kindness, but as far-reaching as human life, and almost as high as God: for, of a truth, thoughts are creators. The Greek word 'Logos,' deepest down, means Thought. If so, what a wonderful new meaning there is in the opening of John's Gospel! 'In the beginning was the Logos; and the Logos was with God; and the Logos was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by it, and without it was not anything made that was made. In it was Life, and the Life was the Light of men.'

As our readers know, the great American preacher, Dr. Talmage, is not one of our idols, but, all the same, we very gladly welcome his testimony. An important American newspaper, in reporting one of his late sermons, virtually prints an excellent Spiritualist tract. American fashion, the sermon is introduced by a series of striking head-lines;—thus:—

FIND WORK IN HEAVEN.

TALMAGE TELLS WHAT DEPARTED FRIENDS ARE DOING.

HIGHER OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL.

ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, EXPLORERS, SCIENTISTS, AND MEN OF EVERY PROFESSION STILL ENGAGED IN THEIR FAVOURITE PURSUITS, WITH MULTIPLIED ADVANTAGES—A GLORIOUS CHANGE FOR THOSE WHO ON EARTH STRUGGLED ON IN DISTASTEFUL OCCUPATION.

Some of Dr. Talmage's notions are over sensational, and some of his expressions of them are far too flighty for our taste, but his belief in our main doctrine is full to overflowing, as the following passage will show:—

What are our departed Christian friends, who in this world had their joy in the healing art, doing now? Busy at their old business. No sickness in heaven, but plenty of sickness on earth, plenty of wounds in the different parts of God's dominion to be healed and to be medicated. You cannot understand why that patient got well after all the skilful doctors had said he must die. Perhaps Abercrombie touched him—Abercrombie, who, after many years' doctoring the bodies and the souls of people in Scotland, went up to God in 1844. Perhaps Abercrombie touched him. Perhaps James Y. Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform as an anæsthetic, mighty for Christ and for medicine, years ago ascended, touched him. I should not wonder if my old friend, Dr. John Brown, who died about fifteen years ago in

Edinburgh—John Brown, the author of 'Rab and His Friends'—John Brown, who was as humble a Christian as he was skilful a physician and world-renowned author—I should not wonder if he had been back again and again to see some of his old patients. Those who had their joy in healing the sickness and the woes of earth, gone up to heaven, are come forth again for benignant medicament.

What are our departed Christian friends doing in heaven; those who on earth found their chief joy in the gospel ministry? They are visiting their old congregations. Most of those old ministers have got their people around them already. When I get to heaven—as by the grace of God I hope I am destined to go to that place—I will come and see you all. Yea, I will come to all the people to whom I have administered in the gospel, and to the millions of souls to whom, through the kindness of the printing press, I am permitted to preach every week in this land and in all lands, for twenty-eight years, without the omission of a single week, I will visit them all. I give them fair notice. Our departed friends of the ministry are engaged in that delectable undertaking now.

And yet when Dr. Talmage next discourses of Spiritualism, he will probably repeat the old tiresome nonsense about the devilry of it. He is a curious man, this Talmage.

An old correspondent, who has been properly brought up on 'LIGHT,' and who ought to know better, writes in a rather depressed mood. The gales worry him: London has been filthy: he caught a vile cold there a fortnight ago and it won't go: the Americans in the Philippines don't please him: the Established Church is going to the dogs or to the Pope: he has lost a favourite spaniel, and taken a bad half-crown: last week a medium told him a lie.

We took no notice of his long catalogue of woes, but sent him Frank Stanton's lovely new hymn, entitled 'YOU'LL GET THERE IN THE MORNIN':—

Keep on lookin' for the bright, bright skies,
Keep on hopin' that the sun'll rise,
Keep on singin' when the whole world sighs,
An' you'll get there in the mornin'!

Keep on ploughin' when you've missed the crops,
Keep on dancin' when the fiddle stops,
Keep on faithful till the curtain drops,
An' you'll get there in the mornin'!

'The Church Gazette' is always rich in stories that, under the veil of humour, hold up our clerical magicians to scorn. Here is one of its latest:—

An old man lay dying. His wife sent in haste for the minister. The minister came, and delivered a commendatory prayer, the wife standing by, sobbing and wringing her hands. Why? Grief, was it? Grief, of course, must have been blended with emotion at so painful a crisis. But the *causa causans* was abject, awful horror. And why? Because, so she averred, the minister had come too late, and her good man was lost *in secula*, to all eternity.

'I tell you,' she sobbed to a friend, 'I tell you it was no use. The breath was out of his body. That prayer was said over a corpse, and it's wicked to pray for the dead. No; the minister didn't know. He thought he was living, but he wasn't. My dear husband is in hell!'

Now, if that be not superstition, what is it? The said dear husband had lived a faithful life, and in truth had attained to spiritual excellence. He was not only a good or moral man, but had also personal experience. Yet, because, forsooth, he was called away before the minister was able to perform the last rites of prayer and blessing he was relegated to the limbo of those without hope. Monstrous! Such religionists as this bigoted woman place their preacher far above the Pope. He, in their judgment, holds the Keys, and can only turn the lock of Paradise by what is really an incantation over a senseless being.

If 'LIGHT' had started that story and drawn that inference, the friends of the clergy might have imagined we were unfriendly: but 'The Church Gazette' is, of course, beyond reproach.

'Thoughts on Psychometry,' by Ida Ellis (Blackpool: The Ellis Family), is an exposition of the nature and uses of Psychometry, by way of question and answer,—an excellent method when followed by a good teacher. A chapter on

'The legal aspects of Psychometry' is useful. It cites 'Reynolds' Newspaper' of May 29th, 1898, for the noteworthy declaration of the Home Secretary that the practice of Palmistry is not in itself an illegal offence; and that it is illegal only when there is an attempt to cheat. This has all along been our contention.

OPEN LETTERS TO THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

BY CHARLES DAWBARN.

III.

Starting from your now accepted fact of 'spirit return,' we face the further fact that the returning spirit has an organism invisible to mortal eye. Science has taught us that such invisibility is altogether an effect of vibration. Everything material, including the human body, becomes invisible under the application of force sufficient to stimulate its atoms to the requisite increased vibration. You accept the fact that it is the old Ego returning in a more refined form. It is the inevitable consequence of this change to the Ego itself to which I am now calling your attention. The instrument it used in earth life will not now express the old tone. Taking first the cases of 'spirit return' that seem to permit the nearest approach to the old identity, and accepting the fact that the new vibration compels a change in the personality, we perceive that occasionally the Ego has had the good or ill fortune to attain an organism that is set, so to speak, only to a higher octave than the form he wielded in earth life. Such a spirit when commencing his first attempt at return would have a partial hold on his old memories, although the Society for Psychical Research would probably shake its head at the doubtful identity. The spirit could possibly talk glibly on unprovable themes, and facts of its earth life would slip in almost unconsciously, but direct questions would embarrass it, because it can only think on a higher octave. It presently finds telepathic aid to facts it then recognises, and registers them on its new scale of vibration. In this way, and possibly aided by senses latent in the mortal, it gradually becomes possessed of its own past. Such proofs of identity have been branded as 'telepathic,' and therefore unsatisfactory, by the Society for Psychical Research, whereas the returning intelligence is compelled to reckon with Nature's law of 'Multiple Personality to one Ego' even if he himself be ignorant of the law. Memory is an essential of personality. Mollie Fancher has thus no less than half a dozen personalities, that, even in earth life, would be unable to prove the identity of the only Mollie Fancher recognised by national law as a responsible person. Yet each of those personalities has a complete recollection of its own experiences, as is the case with the doubles and trebles of the French peasants. I think the facts so far justify us in assuming that no Ego, working amidst new vibrations, can normally recall many events of its own life history. If we assume the supposed 'octave' as a natural possibility, then, with a little kind telepathic assistance to the spirit, the sceptic will be likely to find something more than merely a few facts floating amid the scum of confusion and uncertainty.

It seems to me that the next difficulty that faces us in our attempt to comprehend the laws governing 'spirit return' is based on the ignored fact that the Ego's inherent power of thought must affect the vibrations of his spirit organism, just as it had dominated those of his mortal body. It is true he has left behind, the one or more personalities under which he posed to his then fellow mortals. It is equally true that he now has a new personality, for we know he has lost his old one. We see that it is the Ego which is unchanged by death, and herein has been the misapprehension of the situation. The personality which carries the memories must be changed, for the new vibrations can only very partially respond to vibrations in which the old memories are embedded. But the Ego, being unchanged, is immediately at work to compel the new vibrations to his service. If as an Ego he was formerly thinking hate, revenge, lust, avarice in his mortal form, there can certainly be nothing in his new form of existence that can change his

divine freedom to think saint, devil, or any possible mixture of the two, if only he can enforce suitable vibrations. Thus, recurring to the thought of the octave, he will be in more or less harmony with those who most nearly reflect his Ego's selfhood. We may safely assume that he can far more easily establish his identity to one of his own ilk, who will therefore help him to his old memories, than to one who demands a totally different level of thought. It, therefore, seems reasonably certain that the Ego nearest the animal vibrations of earth life will find least difficulty in discovering his octave, with all its possibilities of recalling the old memories. Thus, if I die to-morrow, and am presently interviewed by the Society for Psychical Research through Mrs. Piper, or other sensitive, I can imagine myself as standing confused, without even a recollection of my earth name. But supposing the inquirer should happen to think of my present reference to 'multiple personality,' I might easily catch the thought because it had been mine in another personality. From that starting point I might gradually recall this article, and perhaps trace it back to details of my earth life that would suggest the old identity, and then I might become disheartened and disgusted at hearing the verdict of wisdom that it was clear evidence of telepathy, since the asserted communicating intelligence gave no proof of identity until he had received a hint or two as to what was expected of him. Surely the wise have not yet acquired a monopoly of wisdom. If the supposed interview were postponed for months or years, I might be much further from even the possibility of the octave, and much more telepathy might be required to recall any of my old memories. And the further progress I might make, the greater would be my distaste for the effect of those old vibrations. Yet further, I can conceive of a spirit having reached an experience wherein he would be willing to give me his thought, so far as I could receive it, but very unwilling to receive mine in return.

So we have the inner life of the Ego as a very important factor in spirit return. The nearer he remains to his old level the easier his old memories may be recalled. But at the same time the less is the value of his 'spirit return' to the sphere of his old vibrations. On the other hand, the further our visitor has advanced the greater may be the value to us of his present knowledge, but also the more difficult will be his passage to our sphere, and the more impossible will have become the proof of his identity.

We will now attempt to apply the same vibratory explanation to the general experiences of mediumship, alike through Mrs. Piper and every other sensitive who becomes a mouthpiece for the invisible. And we will simplify our examination by using only the one sense of hearing as our example. Keeping in mind that interchange of thought must depend upon harmony of vibration between the transmitting and receiving brain instruments, we have the spirit brain representing a vibratory rapidity of, say, 200,000, and a mortal brain whose normal rate of vibration will not exceed, say, 100,000 per second. If a thought is to pass from one brain to the other it is obvious that the vibrations of the spirit brain must be reduced, and the brain movement of the mortal accelerated to a point at which they can both intone the same thought. We know that but few mortals have brains capable of such a change. When one is found, such, for instance, as your favourite Mrs. Piper, we call it 'sensitive.' Usually it is but some one portion of the mortal organism that can respond to spirit vibration, and we call such response clairvoyance, or clairaudience; or perhaps we find it expressing itself in automatic movements of the arm, or in extreme sensitiveness to impressions.

The experiences of to-day seem to demonstrate that but very few mortals have any perceptible sensitiveness to spirit vibrations. Have we not a right to assume that there is a similar unsusceptibility to mortal vibrations in spirit life? Just as the spectroscope shows little or no variety in the raw material of space, save in degree of vibratory force, so the material spirit organism will have its normal vibration, as is the case in earth life. Thus, an intending normal visitor from the unseen world must find it as impossible to reduce his brain vibration to, say, a rate of 150,000 as the normal mortal finds it to increase his to the same point of possible contact. It follows, as a matter of course, that only

abnormal spirits and abnormal mortals can be used to bridge the gulf between the here and the hereafter. Thus, spirit science may also have its Society for Psychical Research—with many members of little or no experience outside of their own normal—seeking through abnormal spirits to reach the point at which the Society for Psychical Research of the mortal may possibly exchange thought.

At this point we become able to estimate somewhat more clearly the reason of the inanities and vacuities of thought through which you have delved in your thirteen years of experience with Mrs. Piper. The only wonder to the scientific mind should be that you have made sufficient, though rare contact with immortal man to satisfy you of the possibility of 'spirit return.' In the first place we must accept 'thought' as the motor which increases or decreases the vibratory movement of the mortal brain atom, but within limits termed normal and abnormal, outside of which is destruction of the machine. We have the placid movement of love, the fierce whirl of hate, with lust, selfish ambition, avarice, &c., each expressed by a certain rate of vibration which intelligence must repeat in another instrument before it can be shared by its fellow man. This law applies strictly to every mortal brain acting on its own monition. Investigators usually hunt in couplets, or triplets, and sometimes in crowds. But since every silent mortal may be sending out many a loud-voiced thought, it is impossible to enforce the customary rule of 'One at a time, gentlemen, if you please.' And further, since the mortal brains there present are expressing almost every rate of vibration, from the harmony of love to the discord of hate, with belief and disbelief merging into scorn and contempt, we see that such conditions are not likely to favour any clear expression of 'spirit return.' Such is and must be the position of the investigator, whether one or many, as an effect of this law under which 'spirit return' must take place, if at all.

In my next we will examine the spirit side of the problem.

San Leandro, Cal., U.S.A.

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT.

Mr. W. E. Long sends us some particulars regarding a new institution, called 'The Church of the Spirit,' of which he is the leader. The basis of its constitution is declared to be—the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; the Immortality and Progress of the Human Soul; the Spiritual Gifts, the Key to the Mystery of Life and Death; the Spiritual Interpretation of the Bible; Salvation by the Life, not the Death, of Jesus; the Universal Power of Inspiration and Spirit Communion.

In this Church it is believed that 'the public teaching of Spiritual Philosophy and the private study of Spiritual Science will unite in the Worship of God and the Service of Man *all* who are seeking revelation *from* and Baptism *by* the Spirit.'

The Church comprises (1) Members who will conduct the private study and sustain the public propaganda; (2) Associates who are enrolled for the purpose of study only. The Government is vested in the members, who will select all officers to carry out the necessary work. It is supported by the voluntary offerings of members, associates and friends. Private circles for the development of the spiritual gifts are held for members and associates. A Library, Children's Lyceum, and Benevolent Fund are included in the work of the Church. Donations in aid of the funds will be gratefully received by W. E. Long, 12, Lowth-road, Camberwell, from whom all information, with forms of application for membership, can be obtained on application, with stamped addressed envelope. Particulars will also be given at the Masonic Hall, Camberwell, on Sunday, March 12th, at 6.30 p.m.

DR. PEEBLES' ADMIRABLE ADDRESS to the recent International Congress, on 'Spiritualism in all Lands and Times,' has been reprinted by the London Spiritualist Alliance in pamphlet form, suitable for distribution amongst inquirers. It will be supplied on the following terms: a single copy, 1½d., post free; a dozen copies, 1s., post free; a hundred copies, 5s., post free. Orders should be addressed to the Librarian of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

THE METHODS OF INVESTIGATION TO BE PURSUED IN THE DOMAIN OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY CASPAR C. LOMISE, TIFLIS, RUSSIA.

Translation of an Address specially written for the International Congress, held in London, June 19-24, 1898.

The most superficial observer can scarcely overlook the unmistakable symptoms of a reaction taking place in the civilised world as a result of the conflict of two opposing elements. We have, on the one side, the interest in occultism of every sort, but especially in the domain of Spiritualism, explored to throw light on the meaning and aim of life, transcendental existence, and the immortality of the soul. We have, on the other hand, the absolute negation of everything approaching mysticism. On closer observation, we are forced to conclude that the tendency towards Spiritualism is steadily gaining ground and attracting representatives of modern scientific thought, men of world-wide reputation, some of whom have finally accepted the truth of Spiritualism, while others acknowledge at least the fact of mediumism. The investigations which they have conducted in the domain of mediumistic phenomena have established their objective reality beyond the possibility of question by the truly scientific mind, for the negation of everything inconsistent with a preconceived system is not a scientific attitude, which is rather the capacity for rejecting all preconceived ideas whensoever they are shown to be false.

We are thus confronted by the following dilemma: Either all that has been affirmed by prominent scientists after minute investigation is a colossal mistake, or it is true in spite of the fact that it upsets many existing notions. We have no hesitation in accepting the latter alternative. If we are told that what these scientists have admitted is inconsistent with fundamental laws of Nature and with scientific theories established for centuries, we reply: Firstly, that it is equally inconsistent with probability that facts recognised by prominent investigators after scientific examination, pursued during many years in different parts of the globe, under different conditions, but all leading to identical results, should yet have no objective reality. Secondly, apparent inconsistency with fundamental laws of Nature and established principles of science may be only intellectual illusion, the passage of new facts through a prism of preconceived ideas, and narrow, dogmatic conceptions of Nature's laws. Thirdly, all scientific hypotheses are deduced from data of observation and experiment; observations and experiments must not, therefore, be rejected *a priori* as inconsistent with current hypotheses, which must be replaced or emended in accordance with new facts. Finally, the laws of Nature, not as they exist objectively, but as they are presented in the subjective consciousness of men, are not absolute, being framed by those who are themselves subject to the universal law of life, to change, progress, and so forth.

Our purpose is, however, to examine the shallow and uncritical attitude of most Spiritualists themselves towards the complex and obscure phenomena of mediumism and the spiritualistic doctrines of the French school.

The whole domain of mediumism may be divided into two sections. In the first are included phenomena capable of bearing intelligible interpretation, for example, mediumistic communications received through psychography, typology, clairvoyant trance, or even direct speech. The second embraces those of a purely physical kind, as knockings, the movement and levitation of objects, materialisation, and so forth. The phenomena of both orders are explained by enthusiastic but superficial Spiritualists as due to the action of 'spirits.' When a communication comes through a medium its author is assumed to be a spirit. If coherent and logical, having the stamp of high intelligence and lofty morality, it is thought to emanate from an exalted spirit. If vulgar and trivial, it is referred to an inferior spirit. If illogical and incoherent, interference is supposed on the part of mischievous or wicked spirits. It is the same with purely physical phenomena; a spirit is held to account for the abnormal motions of objects, for the mysterious knockings which investigation cannot explain; everything, in short, is ascribed to one invariable cause—a spirit, and never anything but a spirit. Let us see

how this explanation appears in the light of positive science. In the preface to the German edition of his work on 'Animism and Spiritism'—that valuable contribution to the literature of Spiritualism which has created a new era in the history of the subject—A. N. Aksakof observes that in considering the phenomena of mediumism, 'We are met at the outset by three hypotheses, each of which has a separate *raison d'être*, as the explanation of different groups of facts. We may, therefore, bring all the phenomena into three categories, which we will define for convenience provisionally under these heads:—

'1. PERSONISM.—Unconscious psychical phenomena occurring within the physical sphere of the medium, the characteristic distinction of which is chiefly personification, namely, the assumption not only of the name, but often of the character, of some one quite strange to the medium, Elementary examples: Conversation by means of a table, writing, or unconscious speech in trance.

'2. ANIMISM.—Unconscious psychical phenomena outside the physical sphere of the medium; for example, mental communion between persons, without speech—or *telepathy*; movement of objects without contact—or *telekinesis*; apparition of phantoms during life—or *telephany*; bodily action at a distance—or *telesmaty*; materialisation, the culminating phenomena of psychic reduplication.

'3. SPIRITISM.—The same external phenomena of Personism and Animism when their acting cause is not only outside the medium but also outside our sphere of existence.

'All three hypotheses frequently enter into an explanation of the same fact. A simple phenomenon of Personism may be also a fact of Animism and Spiritism. The problem is, therefore, to ascertain which should be accepted as the explanation of a given fact, while laying aside the idea of explaining all such facts by one of them. The indiscriminate ascription of every phenomenon to "spirits" is the mistake of Spiritualism, a word which in itself is misleading and should be replaced by one which involves no doctrine, as, for example, the term mediumism, long used in Russia.'

To corroborate his contention that before accepting spirits as the cause of all mediumistic phenomena every other explanation should be tested, the author quotes eminent representatives of Spiritualism with regard to the simultaneous reception by sensitives of impressions from two spheres of existence and the considerable psychological experience required by a medium to distinguish between those derived from minds of this world and those proceeding from other spheres. 'The medium may draw ideas from a person present at the séance, or, indeed, anywhere on the surface of the globe, and may be deceived as to their source. So far as primary inner sensations and personal evidence are concerned, such impressions present themselves in exactly the same manner as those which come from a disembodied spirit. The explanation is that the laws of spiritual sympathy are the same in both worlds. Thus, the contradictory messages ascribed to "evil spirits" non-existent on earth ought in most cases to be referred to earthly intervention. The human spirit is endowed so marvellously, and has at its disposal so many means of manifesting itself, that a man with his own organic forces and nervous dynamic elements may act upon and within himself without being conscious of it.'

The impartial study of facts by strict scientific methods, based on observation and experiment, will alone lead to important discoveries. An instance of this truth is the case of Aksakof himself, who has thus established a whole series of animistic and spiritualistic phenomena, giving a clue to the entangled labyrinth of mediumism, and serving as a firm basis for its further investigation.

The reader must not imagine that we attach exclusive significance to the empirical method of investigation, and ignore or depreciate the speculative, which should not be omitted in any study; but as the experimental method leads to results only when established on incontestable facts, so the other must select as its operative basis the axioms and unrefutable scientific truths which are the result of centuries of intellectual labour. Adopting this severe attitude the investigator will progress slowly, but it will be steadily and along the path leading to truth, and saving from mistakes and disappointments.

(To be continued.)

FRAUDS AND FACTS.

Here is a letter, apparently written from the United States, which appeared in the 'Westminster Gazette' of the 18th inst., and which seems to us of sufficient importance to justify its reproduction in the columns of 'LIGHT':—

To the Editor of THE WESTMINSTER GAZETTE.

SIR,—The case of Eusapia Paladino has nothing puzzling or exceptional to any man who has made the investigation of the subject of Spiritism that it requires, and which its importance, if there is the least foundation in its claims, justifies. There are at this moment hundreds of thousands of men and women in the United States of America investigating the matter earnestly, and I do not venture much in saying that there are more firm believers in the verity of spiritistic communication than there were in the doctrines of Christianity in the year of our Lord 1000, and amongst them there are men of all grades of intellect and scientific capacity. For several years, thirty years ago, I was interested in these investigations, during which I sat two winters in the circle of Judge Edmonds, the principal circle of New York, whose proceedings were regularly printed and published, and outside semi-public demonstrations of the peculiar phenomena I saw many and remarkable 'manifestations' in private, and often extremely exclusive, gatherings of investigating friends. And my conclusion was that the public 'mediums' invariably used fraud when there was no genuine manifestation of the phenomena. And the reason is clear. The public pays for a certain spectacle, and, if the medium fail to render the *quid pro quo*, the visitor, who only comes for the satisfaction of a passing curiosity, abuses the medium, and sometimes makes it very disagreeable. A child who at the age of seven displayed powers which no hypothesis except that of a disembodied intelligence could explain I detected at the age of nine in attempting to produce fraudulent manifestations. I have seen in the professional medium not only the most evident but the most immoral deceptions practised, and credulously accepted by the majority of the men and women who witnessed them. A Russian gentleman who was, according to his own account of himself, which I had no reason to question, employed as a semi-official diplomatic agent at the Court of Napoleon III., and who was on a mission at Compiègne while the famous Home was in favour with the Emperor and staying there, told me an incident which he declared that he was present at, and which is so characteristic of the mediums as I knew them that I consider it quite probable. Both the Emperor and the Empress were believers in Home's powers, and the evidence in favour of them is very ponderous, as hundreds of investigators can testify. The Empress had been most desirous of getting some 'manifestation' of the presence of her sister, the Duchess d'Albe, who had then been some time deceased, but Home always replied that the conditions were unfavourable, and postponed the sitting from day to day, until the Emperor was recalled unexpectedly to Paris, on the afternoon following which departure Home announced that the conditions promised a result, and a sitting was held, at which my Russian friend was present. Fleury, who was in attendance, had no confidence in the medium, and watched him carefully from a distance. The sitting was conducted in perfect silence, until the Empress screamed as in fright and abruptly quitted the table. She had felt a cold hand laid on her arm. The emotion past, Fleury beckoned to Home and conducted him out of the room, where he notified him that he must leave by the next train for Paris. Home protested, but Fleury replied that he had seen his trick, and if he made any difficulty he would expose him to the Empress. Home left, and next day received a notification to leave France. The explanation Fleury gave was this: he had noticed that Home had only slippers on with half stockings, leaving the toes, which were long and flexible, bare. He had put off his slippers and kept his half-bare feet on the marble floor, and when the séance had lasted long enough he reached across under the table and laid his foot on the naked fore-arm of the Empress. And I have seen worse frauds than this practised by mediums who had at other times proved the possession of powers which could not be explained by legerdemain.

With the light which has been thrown on this subject it is just as irrational to assume that Spiritualism is all fraud as that it is all genuine. Scores of careful scientific men in Europe and America have made it the subject of long and careful investigation, and, privately, are ready to admit their belief in its genuineness, but the ridicule thrown on it by the multitude of writers and critics in society, who have never given it a moment's investigation, prevents most of them from openly avowing their belief, and it requires more moral courage than is possessed by the majority of men to avow, as Sir William Crookes, Dr. A. R. Wallace, and others

have done, their acceptance of the phenomena as physical facts. I have, in company with an incredulous, scientifically trained medical man, held sittings with mediums whom no inducement would bring into a public séance or public notice, but in which we have carried on conversations *for hours*, in which our questions were purely mental, and elaborate replies either written or spoken, given without the slightest incoherence. Of such things 'seeing is believing,' but the sceptic who refuses to investigate is more ridiculous than the credulous who investigates, and he who pooh-poohs the whole thing because a medium had tried to humbug him only shows incompetence as an investigator. Even in normal and frequently recurring mental phenomena investigation often requires a long series of observations to arrive at a conclusion, but in those of Spiritism, where every element of uncertainty is known to exist, people demand to be convinced in half an hour at most, and most scientific people are satisfied without having looked at the subject at all. On the other hand, many who have been driven to accept the verity of the physical phenomenon immediately accept all its pretended authority and surrender to it with a credulity which resembles, and often leads to, insanity. The investigation required is long, difficult, and to a certain order of mind extremely dangerous. In America some of the leaders in the 'New Psychology' are giving it the investigation it deserves, and, being metaphysicians, they will work it out as only a metaphysician can. But it has come to stay, and all the derision in the world will not laugh it away. An emigrant to America would like to know what he is to find there or on the way—an emigrant to Eternity finds a similar inquiry, if practicable, only a matter of ridicule. Every man to his taste!—Yours truly,

W. J. STILLMAN.

Mr. Stillman, it will be seen, bravely defends the genuineness of many mediumistic phenomena, but at the same time declares that, in his own personal experience, he has met with instances of undoubted fraud and deception. Possibly so—but he must permit us to say that we attach no credit whatever to his story about Home—a story which, on his own showing, is little better than mere gossip, as he had it from someone who had had it from someone else, and not the slightest evidence is offered of its truth. It is incredible that Home can have been such a fool as to perpetrate the trick described, and that, too, in a light séance, when, as alleged, his movements were clearly visible even to one who 'watched him carefully *from a distance*.' Such an act would be quite at variance with the estimate of Home's character formed by all who knew him intimately, and we do not forget that Sir William Crookes, who had the fullest opportunity of forming a correct judgment regarding him, once generously bore public testimony to the fact that 'to those who knew him Home was one of the most lovable of men, and his perfect genuineness and uprightness were beyond suspicion.'

MRS. CORNER IN BERLIN.

Herr Max Rahn, editor of the 'Uebersinnliche Welt,' mentions in the February number of that journal Mrs. Corner's arrival in Berlin, and briefly records some of the incidents of sittings already held with her in that city. Mrs. Corner, he says, was securely bound to her chair, and all the knots sealed, in such a way that it was completely impossible for her to free herself, and yet both large and small hands were thrust out of the cabinet and white drapery of a silk-like appearance was shown. Before every sitting Mrs. Corner was searched by two ladies, who took care that she had nothing white about her and that she was completely clothed in black. Notwithstanding this, on several occasions a figure clothed in white showed itself for an instant at the division of the curtains of the cabinet, after which occurrences Mrs. Corner was taken into another room by the ladies and stripped to the skin, the ladies being thus perfectly certain that she had no white material about her with which any deception could have been practised. The séances were held in a subdued reddish light. Other sittings were to follow, and Herr Max Rahn will give fuller particulars in a subsequent issue of his journal.

PECKHAM.—'LIGHT' is now on sale at Mr. Edwards', 109, Queen's-road, S.E. (near the Station).

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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY.

We are not sure that Dr. St. George Mivart, in his 'Nineteenth Century' Article on 'The New Psychology,' uses that phrase accurately. He traces it through certain materialistic schools of experimenters to Wundt, who claimed that there was a close affinity between his Psychology and the Peripatetic Philosophy. But it is with Psychology as it is with Socialism. The classifications are endless: in the one case, all the way from incendiary Parisian communists to mild debaters in the County Council; and, in the other case, all the way from the hardest German materialist to pliable Mr. Myers. As for 'The New Psychology': there are half a dozen of them, at least.

But, description apart, Dr. Mivart presents us with a taking little Study, all the more noticeable coming from him, with its curious admissions and suggestions which, one might think, would tell so much against him in other familiar fields. But that is his affair. His ingenious speculations lead up to the concept of a spiritual being, with the help of Aristotle, and will perhaps be to some a little more entertaining than convincing; but there is something in it. His view is that every living creature is the result of the coalescence of two factors into one absolute unity, as water is produced by the coalescence of oxygen and hydrogen. This coalescence, of course, produces something entirely different from the two constituents; and, 'as no two distinct substances can be identical in nature and energy, and as elements with different energies must act with different effects, so we must conclude that in their union to produce water, each element must have acted differently and so have had some different effect upon the result which their union has produced. Also, since their energies must have been different, one of them must have been more vigorous or active than the other.' Standing on this lowly step of the great ladder of nature, we may look up and see that 'it becomes conceivable (though not, of course, imaginable) how a new creature, coming into being from the unification of a certain mass of matter with a certain definite kind of energy, may possess some characteristics due to one principle of its being and others due to the other principle; as also that one of them must be more dominant than the other.'

Which, then, is 'the dominant partner' in this union of matter and energy? The answer to this vital question will probably be largely if not entirely determined by the habits or the studies of the answerer. The physiologist knows (or may we already say *knew*?) only the working of the machine; and the one certain thing about the machine is

that everything seems to depend upon it. It may, indeed, lose some of its parts, and still go on; but the loss of the central part, called the brain, seems to not only dissolve the partnership but to dissolve the partners: and all this the physiologist steadfastly believes (or believed?). But doubts have arisen. Psychology has become something more than a pastime or a poor relation of Science, and that old partnership evidently wants a great deal of looking into; and the number is increasing of those who say, with Wundt, that 'the psychical life is not the product of the bodily organism, but the bodily organism is, rather, a psychical creation.' This clearly brings very good grist to our mill, and Dr. Mivart brings plenty of it.

We are all students. Very well. What is the highest energy known to us in the organic world? Dr. Mivart says it is that which enables us to acquire a knowledge of science: and science is dependent upon a knowledge of concrete facts, a knowledge of abstract truths seen to be universally and necessarily true, and a knowledge of the validity of whatever may be seen necessarily to follow from premisses the truth of which is certain. The energy or principle which enables us to supply these conditions upon which Science depends must be something different from matter in motion, or merely physical force. It can put the whole body before it as something to contemplate, analyse and account for: it can review its own intellectual activities: it can deal not only with facts but with vast varieties of possibilities and apparent impossibilities: it is a very self-sufficient Ego which insists upon it and proves that it is vastly superior to the body and its physical limitations. So that 'no certainty which we can attain to about any external object can be nearly so certain as this certainty we have concerning our own being—first as to the immaterial, dynamic aspect of that being, and, secondly, as to its material and physical aspect. This is at once the primary and highest truth of physical science.'

Such is Dr. Mivart's account of this complex creature, Man. What then? If the 'dominant partner' is such a being as he suggests, what are its chances in relation to the dissolution of the partnership? 'When this psychical energy which has dominated us during life has disappeared, and death has reduced our active being to a mass of mere inanimate matter, what becomes of the "soul," what is the fate of this energy?' Nature's response, he thinks, is but feeble; and, of the last refinements of science, we can only say that they do not advance any fresh arguments against the possibility of the soul surviving the destruction of the body.

We think this is a somewhat poverty-stricken account of the situation, but we of course agree with Dr. Mivart's own conclusion, that 'it certainly seems congruous that an energy such as I have just described, capable of knowing intimately so many truths and its own existence and mental processes, should be a substantial and persisting energy. Justice also, which every now and then makes itself manifest as existing in the very heart of things, seems to demand a more persistent stage to work out rewards and retributions than our present life affords; and, for men convinced of the truth of Theism, confidence in a future life may well seem a necessary consequence of the conditions which have been made to surround us here.'

As to the depressing and irrelevant question:—How can it be? we never remember seeing it better, because more simply, met than by Dr. Mivart in this article:—

It is most true we cannot understand 'how' the soul can reason, imagine, or perceive *without* a brain and without organs of sense, but it is no less true that we cannot understand 'how' the soul can reason, imagine, or perceive *with* these organs. 'How' knowledge is possible, here and now; 'how' the joint action of our eyes and brain produces a field of vision with varied objects within it, who can even pretend to know? The simplest sensation is profoundly

mysterious. We have, therefore no right to dogmatise as to possibilities of action, the conditions of which are quite unknown to us; and, for myself, I must confess I see no impossibility in the soul (assuming that it can and does persist after death) being able to apprehend and appreciate other beings like itself and existing under conditions similar to its own.

This keen and, in some respects, beautiful little Study ends with a reflection which is at once subtle and simple, but our readers are well acquainted with it; and, besides, we prefer to end by referring them to the Study itself.

SEANCE WITH EUSAPIA PALADINO.

The February number of 'Psychische Studien' contains an account of a somewhat noteworthy séance with Eusapia Paladino. This is preceded by a few remarks from Dr. G., who translated it from the French into German, the account having been written by Adolphe Brisson, and published in 'Le Temps' of December 17th, 1898. Dr. G. says that the fact of such a narrative appearing in the leading political journal of France is very remarkable, and that the details given of Victorien Sardou's career, as well as that of Eusapia herself, are of great interest. The whole account occupying some seven pages of 'Psychische Studien,' is too long for insertion in 'LIGHT,' but an abbreviation of it may be interesting to our readers.

It is worthy of remark that in spite of an occasional little flippancy of style, M. Brisson writes as though he were earnestly interested in the subject, and in the end was fully convinced of the genuineness of the manifestations.

He commences by saying that, hearing that the celebrated astronomer, Camille Flammarion, had arranged for Eusapia Paladino to come from Naples and to give a séance at his house, he begged for an invitation, which he obtained, and was one of the party assembled for the sitting. This was preceded by a dinner at seven o'clock, at which the whole of the party were present. These were: M. and Madame Flammarion, Eusapia, M. Brisson, a Madame Z., a well-known psychist, M. de Rochas, Victorien Sardou, the noted dramatist and Spiritualist, as well as one or two other gentlemen, who did not wish their names mentioned.

M. Brisson describes Eusapia as being somewhat over forty years of age, who must, when young, have been very pretty, and whose dark eyes still retain the charm and brilliancy of youth. He says she is a typical Neapolitan, very demonstrative and excitable, and adds that she would have made a first-rate actress had not fate called her to another career.

The conversation during dinner must have been highly interesting, for Sardou gave an account of his spiritualistic experiences, and of his discovery of his own mediumistic powers; after which Eusapia told her own life history, supplementing her language, which, to those who did not know Italian well, was difficult to understand, by actions and gestures, so that, as M. Brisson says, it was more like acting than talking. 'She does not narrate her story, she lives it.'

The séance itself is briefly described. After some considerable delay, Eusapia not appearing at all in a hurry to begin, she withdrew with Madame Flammarion into an adjoining room, where she removed her gown and put on a loose peignoir, which left her movements free. A kitchen table was placed in a corner of the salon, behind which was hung a curtain, and behind the curtain a chair was placed with a number of small objects, such as a violin, a bell, an accordion, and a musical box belonging to M. Flammarion, and in this corner there was neither door nor communication with any other part of the room.

Eusapia took her seat at the table with her back to the curtain, while the two persons who had been chosen to hold her each grasped one of her hands, holding the thumbs, so that there was no possibility of the hands being changed; they likewise put their feet on those of Eusapia. Three others sat with their hands on the table, forming a magnetic chain, and all anxiously awaited for what should come.

Soon convulsive movements in Eusapia were observed, and she passed into a state of trance, though without losing her perception of everything that went on around her, and being keenly alive to every movement or look of suspicion or incredulity on the part of the sitters.

'The next two hours,' says M. Brisson, 'were passed by us in a species of nightmare. At first, in full light, the table rose up from the ground and the curtain was blown stiffly out like a sail in a gale of wind. Then the lights were lowered, and in semi-darkness we saw objects brought to us without the aid of mortal hands. In the background, where the curtain formed a dark cabinet, the strings of the violin were heard to sound, the bell to ring, the musical box was wound up, and the tambourine floated above our heads, shaking its tiny bells. I felt my sleeve pulled by an unseen hand, and at the same moment Madame Z. uttered a cry of mingled joy and terror at feeling the same thing done to herself. Now my beard was pulled, and a cushion thrown in my face. My neighbour on the left, a talented Parisian, saw through the gap in the curtain an apparition in the form of a little girl, which disappeared through the floor. I was less fortunate, and did not see this appearance. On the other hand, a book I held was forcibly snatched from me, and some mischievous being several times pulled the button of my coat.'

'Eusapia shows signs of exhaustion, she rattles in her throat, and the gas is turned on again. I can read on the faces of the others traces of the emotions they have experienced. The Professor looks grave, M. Flammarion anxious, Madame Z. is very pale, and my neighbour, who had seen the apparition, looks very agitated.'

'M. Sardou says to me, "Now, that I call a really good séance!"'

'We pass down stairs to our carriage, supporting the exhausted Eusapia; one o'clock strikes from the nearest church tower—the concierge is in bed, the staircase in darkness, and our hearts are full of awe.'

THE PREVALENCE OF 'SUPERSTITIONS.'

Mr. Robert Hichens has contributed an article to the 'Queen' on what he designates the superstitions of the present day, when, he says, men cling to exciting lies with the fervour of the drowning creature for the floating plank; women hug the flimsiest superstitions to their breasts more closely than their own babies; and the very children are beginning to babble of Christian Science, Palmistry, and Spiritualism, while prattling gaily against the humdrum beliefs that satisfied the pious aspirations of their forefathers. It is quite the mode in so-called fashionable circles to deny the existence of the Deity, and to affirm the prophetic power of the palm. It is quite the rage to worship a fringed man in Bond-street, and to sneer at the idea of worshipping in church. Even archdeacons consult the modern substitutes for the well-known Witch of Endor, continues Mr. Hichens. Even judges and Q.C.'s may be observed darting surreptitiously on Saturday afternoons into narrow passages above whose portals are writ small such legends as 'So-and-So, Clairvoyante.' Here and there a man or woman may arise who possesses some strange power. Here and there some unusual individual may follow curious paths in the whole-hearted desire of coming at last into the holy light. But for the most part the fire that burns before the altars of superstition is fed by fools, serving the behests of the crafty.

If Mr. Hichens really thinks so, there is no reason why, as an honest man, he should not say what he thinks. But is he sure that he is right? What, for instance, about the archdeacons, judges, and Q.C.'s?

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, will be held in the French Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30, on the evening of Friday, March 10th, when

MR. J. J. MORSE

Will deliver an Address on

'SPIRITUALISM: ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH, WORK, AND WORKERS,'

illustrated by over one hundred dissolving views shown by means of a powerful oxy-hydrogen lantern; many of the pictures having been obtained during his recent visit to the United States.

SOME RECENT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

BY 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

V.

(Conclusion.)

In my last article I adverted to the fact that a further communication, automatically written, had reached me, purporting to be from the ex-Lancashire doctor before mentioned. In this letter (which is in the usual caligraphy) he expresses his surprise that I cannot be furnished with the Brighton specific, adding, 'nevertheless it is a profound secret in its manufacture.' He then goes on to state that 'Moxton wishes you to get Mr. —' (the trance medium), as another spirit physician (whom he did not name) would be able 'to diagnose Miss —' (the patient's) 'trouble.' The message then went on to deal with some other family matters, of interest to me but not to your readers, and ended with the usual signature. Acting on the suggestion of the spirit doctor, I, on Monday, February 6th, wrote the trance medium in question, asking him to come and see us either on Wednesday, 8th, or Thursday, 9th of that month, whichever was most convenient; and in reply he fixed Wednesday, 8th, at 8 p.m., for the séance, which accordingly took place in my house at that date and hour. Nothing was said by me to the trance medium to let him understand the cause of my again soliciting his assistance, only that my lady clairvoyant's control wished to speak through him. The circle consisted of five, including the clairvoyant, the trance medium, the patient, myself, and my wife. Our circles are always powerful and harmonious, and this one was especially so, although the trance medium was nearly half an hour sitting with us ere he went under control. The clairvoyant then informed us that three doctors were in the room, and her control was using the vocal organs of the medium, while the one designated as 'Moxton' stood close to him, and in earnest consultation with the third doctor. Then followed a learned, yet practical discourse on eczema, its causes and cure, the latter being stated to be tedious and often disappointing. The admission was made that the 'marsh-mallows water,' though beneficial, had failed to subdue the irritation, and then we had given to us a list of medicines and directions for use, externally and internally. I have jotted all these down, and they are now in the possession of the Editor of 'LIGHT' for the inspection of anyone interested.

Three of these specifics for a tonic were herbal, and I was told to get them from a medical botanist, while one of the remaining ones (of which I never before heard) was ordered to be got from a large drug shop about half a mile from our house, and which, I was informed, was the only place in town which dispensed it. The control also stated that I must persevere in my endeavours to get the Brighton specific, as it was a most valuable one, and suggested an application to the last-mentioned drug establishment to ascertain if they could procure it for me. And here I would interpolate that fortunately this was unnecessary, as next morning brought me a letter from the druggist to whom I had last applied, saying he was now able to let me have the required remedy, and an order has accordingly been sent for it (to-day, February 9th). Since that date, viz., on February 16th, the specific in question has been forwarded to me. The whole correspondence as to this Brighton episode is in the hands of the Editor of 'LIGHT,' who, I think, will bear me out in this, that no efforts were spared to get the remedy, and they were in the end successful.

The séance lasted for an hour and a half, and the control's examination of the patient, and dissertation on the trouble and its cure, occupied three-quarters of an hour. Before leaving, the spirit doctor advised my daughter to be taken to Harrogate in the spring, to undergo a three weeks' course of the waters and baths at that Midland spa. Thereafter we had an interesting conversation with our former 'interlocutor,' the spirit of the late Mr. Brown, who kept us richly amused for about half an hour, and thereafter the medium emerged from trance.

Of course it is too early for me to have the slightest idea of the effect of the remedies suggested, but should they

prove successful or the reverse, your readers will be duly advised thereof, after a proper trial has been made.

With regard to Dr. G., of C., who appeared at the former séance, along with another well-known theologian, I regret to say he cannot be traced. Through the kindness of an antiquarian friend, I was able to have a look at a book containing the ecclesiastical history of the place for the period between 1500 and 1867, and his name does not appear as the *curé* of souls during that period. But as there are two or three Dissenting chapels at C., it is quite possible he may have been a minister in one of them; or it is also probable that Dr. G. may have 'resided' there, as it is a pretty place only three miles from a county town, and he may have spent his closing years at C. I have done my best to trace him at any rate, but have failed in the effort.

Summing up these recent personal experiences, I contend that they prove one thing very clearly, viz., that, apart from tending to afford an answer to the great question of all ages, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' there is much benefit to be derived from Spiritualism. Certainly, in the present instance, there is disclosed what I may designate as 'a determined effort' on the part of our spirit friends to eradicate a disease, and restore a suffering girl to health. The effort may be unsuccessful, but at all events it is directed with intelligence, knowledge of physiology, and skill in diagnosis. Other lessons also come out from the details, commonplace as they may be deemed by our sceptical friends who wish all phenomena to be on a high and lofty plane. For instance, how very 'human' was the initial mistake as to the Brighton firm having ceased to exist before the prescription was given. This was due entirely, as it appears to me, to the person designated as Dr. Moxton having failed to take the precaution to verify the address before he gave it to his colleague, the ex-Lancashire doctor. This was followed up (just as we would have done on earth) by their endeavouring to trace the firm through the publishing house who advertised the remedy in one of their serial publications, and which led, through my further correspondence with third parties (unnecessary to be detailed), to my obtaining the specific originally recommended. It also appears to me to be abundantly clear, from the facts of this case, that medical men are greatly *en rapport* in the other world, and are still (apparently) capable, through certain 'earthly agents,' of pursuing the task of alleviating pain and curing diseases here. What we call 'death,' or rather 'transition,' seems to enable them no longer 'to see through a glass darkly,' but appears greatly to enlarge their spiritual vision; and if these personal experiences can carry conviction to any 'doubting Thomas' (and there are many such), they have not been written in vain. They have extended to much greater length than I anticipated, but as the case developed there seemed no alternative but to give its full details as carefully and concisely as possible.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- 'The Educational Review,' for February. London: 203, Strand, W.C. Price 4d.
- 'The South African Spiritualist.' A Monthly Journal devoted to the History, Phenomena, Philosophy, and Teachings of Spiritualism. Edited by JOSEPH FREEMAN. No. 1. Published by Joseph Freeman, 2, Daisy-villas, Observatory-road, near Cape Town, South Africa. Price 3d., or 3s. 6d. per annum.
- 'The Theosophical Review,' for February. London: 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 1s.
- 'Der Tod—Das Jenseits—Das Leben im Jenseits.' Von DR. CARL DU PREL. Germany: Verlag des Verfassers, Dr. Carl Du Prel, Barerstrasse 50/III., München. Price 2 marks.
- 'Research.' A Monthly Magazine for all interested in Character Development. No. 1. Edited by INA OXENFORD. London: L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial-arcade, Ludgate-circus, E.C. Price 6d.
- 'The Theosophist,' for February. London agents: 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 2s.
- 'The Exodus,' for February. New York, U.S.A.: The Gestefeld Publishing Company, P. O. Box, 106, Madison-square.

NEW YORK, U.S.A.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Messrs. Brentano, 31, Union-square.

THOUGHTS ON THINGS.

BY THADDEUS HYATT.

IV.

The philosophy of Christ that man is two in one—a soul-man which is the real selfhood, and an animal-man which is but a simulacrum—is a doctrine of Incarnation, inasmuch as the spirit or soul-man is not derivative from Nature upon any lines which would not equally make possible the spirit world with its habitants, and even God Himself, a resultant of forces native to matter. And inasmuch as incarnation signifies ‘to be clothed upon with flesh,’ the antecedent existence of the soul-man, or that which is clothed upon, must be admitted.

The existence of Christ in the spirit world before He became flesh, is not doubted by anyone who believes in Him. A true understanding of what He taught shows, however, that this is equally true of all human beings. All are incarnates. Unity with God, the goal of the human soul, was the message of Christ to man; a possibility not for the man Christ alone, but for all men. His assertion ‘I and my Father are one,’ read in the light of His philosophy, is as understandable as it is simple. His injunction, ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect,’ was not lightly made, for He Himself had attained to it; not by a way barred to others, but by one open to all. ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life,’ said He. Pioneer of our pilgrimage, He had travelled the way that leads to God; wherefore He saith: ‘No man cometh to the Father but by Me’; which is to say, by the way which I have trodden. Had He been God in theologic-dogma sense, He could not thus have been an example, pattern, and guide for us. Christ was man’s brother—bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, heart of his heart. The divinity in Him is theirs likewise. He invites all to share it with Him. Were they powerless to do so, His invitation were mockery. Needless, however, to say that His perfectionment is not a possible accomplishment during the short span of one human existence on earth; not a possibility to one brief incarnation. To the question, ‘How then did Christ accomplish this work for Himself?’ there is but one rational answer: By successive incarnations!

No. V.

Charles Darwin just missed the true philosophy of man when he wrote, ‘A moral being is one who is capable of comparing his past and future actions and motives; of approving of some and disapproving of others. The fact that man is the one being who with certainty can be thus designated makes the greatest of all distinctions between him and the lower animals.’

Had Darwin said between him and animals, leaving out ‘the lower,’ he would have hit the mark. But the great naturalist did not see the the mark; and neither do his followers, for anyone who believes that the man who survives death is a product of evolution under the working of the laws which control material nature, cannot but find himself in the same state of bewilderment that Darwin was in when he wrote as follows: ‘He who believes in the advancement of man from some lowly organised form will naturally ask, How does this bear on the belief in the immortality of the soul?’ Instead of answering, Darwin evades his question, thus: ‘Few persons feel any anxiety from the impossibility of determining at what precise period in the development of the individual from the first trace of the minute germinal vesicle to the child, either before or after birth, man becomes an immortal being; and there is no greater cause for anxiety because the period in the gradually ascending organic scale cannot possibly be determined.’

The reason why Darwin could not determine the precise period when man becomes an immortal being, is because the Darwinian man never does become immortal. With a genesis in protoplasm, an advancement ‘from a hairy-tailed quadruped, derived from an ancient marsupial animal . . . through a long line of diversified forms . . . from some fish-like animal,’ how could he become immortal and they not be participants? The death that is eternal for the hairy-tailed quadrupeds, ‘marsupials,’ and ‘fish-like’ forms,

which perished with the ages that are dead, is the fateful inheritance of the Darwinian man; a logical catastrophe not met by the admission of a nebulous something called ‘soul,’ which may or may not be life to the body; which may or may not become immortal at ‘some period before or after birth,’ and which upon the death of the body, or afterwards, may or may not become individualised.

Could Darwin have perceived and accepted the great truth of man’s two-fold individuality, the logical catastrophe which now weakens his theory could never have arisen. Everything claimed for his hypothesis might be admitted, without disturbing in the slightest degree the foundations on which rest the doctrine of man’s native immortality and the continuity of his existence, despite the fate of the Darwinian man.

T. H.

Brooklyn, January, 1899.

‘THE NEW ROME.’

Mr. Robert Buchanan’s new volume of poems (‘The New Rome.’ London: Walter Scott) could hardly be even described under two pages of ‘LIGHT’; it is so comprehensive, so inconsistent, so brilliant, audacious, naughty, tragic, beautiful. If anyone is tired of the poetry of prettiness and the versification of maudlin sentiment, let him take a header in this running water of real life.

‘The New Rome’ is, of course, modern London: and Robert Buchanan knows every bit of it. He does not set out to please anybody, and he is sure to shock a great many, but he is everywhere a strong and virile thinker with a power of expression, and of expression in every mood, unique, we think, in his case. But, we repeat, the reader must be prepared for strong meat and not a few surprises.

Here and there he turns his lantern upon Psychical Research, and, in his wonderfully clever poem, entitled ‘Seraphina Snowe,’ he brings out a thought which is just now particularly valuable. ‘Dr. Snooks’ thinks he has caught her cheating, and bolts; but the poet analyses this subtle compound, and feels the mystery of this delicate personality. Even detecting her in what may be called pretending does not exhaust the matter. Is not Nature full of queer tricks of her own? He says:—

O little lady, do they divine
That they have *fathom’d* thee and thine?
Fools! Let them fathom fire,—and beat
Light in a mortar; ay, and heat
Soul in a crucible! Let them try
To conquer the Light, and the Wind, and the Sky!
Darkly the secret forces lurk,
We know them least where most they work,
And here they meet and mix in thee,
For a strange and mystic entity,
Making of thy pale soul in sooth
A life half trickery and half truth.

Well? . . . O my philosophic friend,
Does Nature herself ne’er condescend
To cheats and shams, and freaks and tricks?
Or does she rather affect to mix
Reason with revel? Are you certain
That *all* is honest behind the curtain
Of lovely things you rejoice to meet?
Doth the Earth never sham, the Sky never cheat?
And do we question and rebel
If the cheat is pleasant and plausible?
Do we growl at the Rainbow in the air,
Or frown at the Mirage here and there?
Nay, we take these things as they come, my friend,
And let them into our being blend!
Passive we yield to the Sun and the Light,
To the scent of the flowers, to the sense and the sight.
Taking all changes with souls serene. . . .
And so I take poor Seraphine!
Beautiful mingling, tinted well,
Of ‘Ariel’ and ‘Little Nell,’
With a spice of ‘Puck’!

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—‘LIGHT’ is kept on sale by W. H. Robinson, 4, Nelson-street, and Book Market.

NOTES ON CLAIRVOYANCE.

Mr. C. W. Leadbeater is contributing some interesting articles on Clairvoyance to the 'Theosophical Review.' Here are some extracts from the current issue:—

INTENTIONAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

When the principles are loosened at the approach of death the paying of intentional astral visits seems very often to become possible for people who have been unable to perform such a feat at any other time. There are even more examples of this class than of the other; I epitomise a good one given by Mr. Andrew Lang on p. 100 of 'Dreams and Ghosts'—an example of which he himself says, 'Not many stories have such good evidence in their favour':—

'Mary, the wife of John Goffe, of Rochester, being afflicted with a long illness, removed to her father's house at West Malling, about nine miles from her own.

'The day before her death she grew very impatiently desirous to see her two children, whom she had left at home to the care of a nurse. She was too ill to be moved, and between one and two o'clock in the morning she fell into a trance. One widow Turner, who watched with her that night, says that her eyes were open and fixed, and her jaw fallen. Mrs. Turner put her hand upon her mouth, but could perceive no breath. She thought her to be in a fit, and doubted whether she were dead or alive.

'The next morning the dying woman told her mother that she had been at home with her children, saying, "I was with them last night when I was asleep."

'The nurse at Rochester, widow Alexander by name, affirms that a little before two o'clock that morning she saw the likeness of the said Mary Goffe come out of the next chamber (where the elder child lay in a bed by itself), the door being left open, and stood by her bedside for about a quarter of an hour; the younger child was there lying by her. Her eyes moved and her mouth went, but she said nothing. The nurse, moreover, says that she was perfectly awake; it was then daylight, being one of the longest days in the year. She sat up in bed and looked steadfastly on the apparition. In that time she heard the bridge clock strike two, and a while after said: "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, what art thou?" Thereupon the apparition removed and went away; she slipped on her clothes and followed, but what became of her she cannot tell.'

The nurse was apparently more frightened by its disappearance than its presence, for after this she was afraid to stay in the house, and so spent the rest of the time until six o'clock in walking up and down outside. When the neighbours were awake she told her tale to them, and they of course said she had dreamt it all; she naturally enough warmly repudiated that idea, but could obtain no credence until the news of the other side of the story arrived from West Malling, when people had to admit that there might have been something in it.

A noteworthy circumstance in this story is that the mother found it necessary to pass from ordinary sleep into the profounder trance condition before she could consciously visit her children; it can, however, be paralleled here and there among the large number of similar accounts which may be found in the literature of the subject.

The man who fully possesses this type of clairvoyance has many and great advantages at his disposal. Not only can he visit without trouble or expense all the beautiful and famous places of the earth, but if he happens to be a scholar, think what it must mean to him that he has access to all the libraries of the world! What must it be to the scientifically-minded man to see taking place before his eyes so many of the processes of the secret chemistry of nature—to the philosopher to have revealed to him so much more than ever before of the working of the great mysteries of life and death? To him those who are gone from this plane are dead no longer, but living, and within reach for a long time to come; for him many of the conceptions of religion are no longer matters of faith, but of knowledge. Above all, he can join the army of invisible helpers, and really be of use on a large scale. Undoubtedly clairvoyance, even when confined to the astral plane, is a great boon to the student.

Certainly it has its dangers also, especially for the untrained; danger from evil entities of various kinds, which may terrify or injure those who allow themselves to lose the courage to face them boldly; danger of deception of all sorts, of misconceiving and misinterpreting what is seen; greatest of all, the danger of becoming conceited about the thing and

of thinking it impossible to make a mistake. But a little common-sense and a little experience will readily guard a man against these.

Before leaving the subject of full and intentional clairvoyance it may be well to devote a few words to answering one or two questions as to its limitations, which constantly occur to students. Is it possible, we are often asked, for the seer to find any person with whom he wishes to communicate anywhere in the world, whether he be living or dead?

To this the reply must be a conditional affirmative. Yes, it is possible to find any person if the experimenter can, in some way or other, put himself *en rapport* with that person. It would be hopeless to plunge vaguely into space to find a total stranger among all the millions around us without any kind of clue; but, on the other hand, a very slight clue would usually be sufficient.

If the clairvoyant knows anything of the man whom he seeks, he will have no difficulty in finding him, for every man has what may be called a kind of musical chord of his own—a chord which is the expression of him as a whole, produced perhaps by a sort of average of the rates of vibration of all his different vehicles on their respective planes. If the operator knows how to discern that chord and to strike it, it will by sympathetic vibration attract the attention of the man instantly wherever he may be, and will evoke an immediate response from him.

Whether the man were living or recently dead would make no difference at all, and clairvoyance of the fifth class could at once find him even among the countless millions in the devachanic state, though in that case the man himself would be unconscious that he was under observation. Naturally a seer whose consciousness did not range higher than the astral plane—who employed therefore one of the earlier methods of seeing—would not be able to find a person upon the devachanic plane at all; yet even he would at least be able to tell that the man sought for *was* upon that plane, from the mere fact that the striking of the chord as far up as the astral level produced no response.

If the man sought were a stranger to the seeker, the latter would need something connected with him to act as a clue—a photograph, a letter written by him, an article which had belonged to him, and was impregnated with his personal magnetism; any of these would do in the hands of a practised seer.

Again I say, it must not therefore be supposed that pupils who have been taught how to use this art are at liberty to set up a kind of astral intelligence office through which communication can be had with missing or dead relatives. A message given from this side to such a one might or might not be handed on, according to circumstances, but no reply might be brought, lest the transaction should partake of the nature of a phenomenon—something which could be proved on the physical plane to have been an act of magic.

A good deal of additional information about other planets can be obtained by the use of such clairvoyant faculties as we have been describing. It is possible to make sight enormously clearer by passing outside of the constant disturbances of the earth's atmosphere, and it is also not difficult to learn how to put on an exceedingly high magnifying power, so that even by ordinary clairvoyance a good deal of very interesting astronomical knowledge may be gained. But as far as this earth and its immediate surroundings are concerned, there is practically no limitation.

MRS. B. B. HILL.

We take this means of tendering our grateful thanks to the many friends who have manifested their kindly sympathy by mail and otherwise, in our bereavement, by the loss of the earthly presence of wife and mother. We should be glad to respond to each friend direct, but time and circumstances prevent. Will our friends kindly accept this brief though heartfelt acknowledgment of their tender sympathy and fraternal regard for the departed one, who scattered seeds of kindness all along life's way even unto the end, and whose religion was to do good and help the needy?

B. B. HILL.

Philadelphia, U.S.A.

M. E. CADWALLADER

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers and Mrs. d'Esperance.

SIR,—In reply to Mr. Myers' statements in 'LIGHT' of the 11th inst., I beg to confirm my assertion that he never had any sésances with Mrs. d'Esperance. Anyone who reads the letter of his assistant secretary of November 19th in reply to Mr. Dawbarn will clearly see that it was a question of whether Mr. Myers had, from personal investigation, a knowledge of Mrs. d'Esperance's mediumship, or whether he had neglected the inquiry.

To convey the impression that he had given every attention in this respect, he says: 'I sat with this medium,' on the three occasions referred to, and now he says: 'I never sat, nor said that I sat, with Mrs. d'Esperance for *materialisations*, which is what Mr. Fidler seems to think that I meant.' It is simply preposterous to put forward any such explanation—that I thought anything of the kind. It was about four years after the dates he gives that Mrs. d'Esperance gave any sésances for materialisation. Mr. Myers, from personal investigation, knew absolutely nothing of Mrs. d'Esperance's mediumship, and yet by stating that he sat with her he conveys the impression that she gave him sésances, which were quite sufficient to enable him to express a conclusive and derogatory opinion.

I have carefully read Mrs. d'Esperance's journal as to the three dates in question, and I find that she reports as follows:

'Saturday, October 16th (1875). I arrived in Newcastle from London quite exhausted and done up. Mr. Barkas called on me to introduce me to some Russian friends who were staying in Newcastle for the purpose of holding sésances with Miss Wood and Miss Fairlamb. I was very tired but saw his friends for a short time.

'Lunched with them next day, afterwards tried a few minutes for writing. No one except one of the Russians seemed to know how to ask a question clearly. Only his were answered sensibly, so we gave it up as a failure. A sésance was given by Miss Wood, and I was invited to make one of the circle. One of the gentlemen with Mr. Armstrong looked after the tying up of the medium. I had never seen anything of the kind before, and felt very indignant at the manner in which it was done. I asked to be allowed to leave the sésance. In this I was overruled. The finish of it was that Miss Wood was discovered a little later nearly strangled, quite unconscious, her face convulsed and discoloured. There were no other manifestations. On my expressing regret at the result of my first attendance at a sésance for materialisation, I was asked to meet them all again next morning at a sésance given to them by Mrs. Petty and her son, which I did. They wanted me to give them sésances, but I was feeling too unwell, and did not invite them home, as the attempts at the hotel were failures.'

In all the above there is not a word about Mr. Myers' three sésances, no matter how we construe the words 'sat' or 'materialisation.' He is not even mentioned as being there at all; and had she given him three sésances, it is only reasonable to suppose she would have known something about him. I do not doubt his word that he was present at the lunch, and I assume he was the 'gentleman present who looked after the tying up of Miss Wood,' as it is very like what is supposed to be a 'scientific' method of investigation.

It is quite clear why Mrs. d'Esperance did not give any sésances on the dates claimed as those on which she gave three sésances to Mr. Myers. Exhausted as she was, and arriving from London on the 16th, the day of the first of the three sésances, I accept her journal as reliable and conclusive on the fact that none were held by her.

On the other hand, I admit that Mr. Myers may be quite correct as to the 'Senior Wrangler' being a 'wooden spoon'—the value of whose dictum I may safely impugn as to the questions and answers on scientific subjects.

Göthenburg.

MATTHEWS FIDLER.

Mrs. Piper and Miss Goodrich-Freer.

SIR,—I was present at the 'Sesame Club,' and beg to assure all whom it may concern that though Miss Goodrich-Freer has an exceptionally small voice, all she had to say in regard to Mrs. Piper, and her abuse of all other mediums, was very distinctly heard by myself and your very trust-

worthy reporter, who sat on the chair next to me, and I made it my business to ask him if he heard distinctly. Miss Freer does not hold herself responsible for 'any newspaper report of what she said,' but I fancy there may be persons whose memory is quite equal to that of Miss Goodrich-Freer, and whose credit for veracity is quite as good as her own.

Miss Freer distinctly gave her audience to understand that she was in the habit of taking poor 'epileptic' Mrs. Piper for drives, and during these drives Mrs. Piper's general conversation was 'concerning dress' and such like little commonplace feminine subjects.

I fancy that Dr. Hodgson is quite as capable of forming an opinion in regard to psychic gifts as Miss Freer, who is apt to jump to conclusions on subjects of which she is very ignorant. I know her personally, and believe her to be distinctly incapable of forming a reliable opinion on psychic subjects from *her own observation*—what she may have read or gleaned from others' experiences does not count for anything. Her patronising pity for 'poor Mrs. Piper' is wasted, and I cannot help feeling sorry for her when I see that she has to resort to throwing doubts on your reporter to escape the consequences of her attack on Mrs. Piper, Spiritualism, and 'all mediums.'

I very much regret that 'all mediums' were not present to hear her opinion of them; if they had been I fancy she would in future have to depend entirely on her own 'mediumship' for something to talk about, and the result would then be very small indeed. B. RUSSELL-DAVIES.

'The Life of Laurence Oliphant.'

SIR,—Perhaps some of your readers may be able to reply to certain queries which occur to me when I come across any books of the late Mrs. Oliphant. In her 'Life of Laurence Oliphant,' she treats Spiritualism, as professed by Laurence Oliphant, in a very unsympathetic manner, which perhaps is putting it mildly, in face of the manifest dislike and distrust of the subject which she shows throughout the second volume. Now, I should like to know if she became a believer in Spiritualism between the writing of that book and the later productions of her pen, such as 'A Little Pilgrim in the Unseen,' which I see is advertised among your list of books on Spiritualism. I have just read another story of hers, 'The Lady's Walk,' which reveals an entirely changed attitude of mind on the part of the authoress in regard to this subject. I should like to know that she became a *believer*, and not merely used the facts of the spiritual world to furnish material for the novelist's craft.

I do not see Laurence Oliphant's 'Scientific Religion' amongst the list of books suggested for the study of Spiritualism. In what estimation were he and his work held by Spiritualists?

I trust you will pardon my troubling you with inquiries of this kind, but perhaps the keen interest I feel in this, to me, 'new learning,' may be my excuse.

ONE WHO HAS RECENTLY BECOME A SPIRITUALIST.

The Late Rev. W. R. Tomlinson.

SIR,—I cannot help sending you an incident relative to the transition of this earnest Spiritualist, with whom I have had for several years a most friendly and interesting correspondence. It is certainly more than a year since I last heard from him, and he was then looking forward to an early removal from amongst us. I had no intimation of his passing till it appeared in your issue of to-day, the 18th, and on mentioning the event to my wife, she for the first time informed me that Miss —, our young lady clairvoyant relative, had, on the morning of Sunday last (February 12th), told her that on the preceding night (Saturday, 11th) she had been visited by an old gentleman named Tomlinson, who said he had lived at 'Briarswood,' Weymouth, which is the address given in to-day's 'LIGHT.' As I have said, it is some time since Mr. Tomlinson last wrote me, and I could not have recalled the address till I saw it in print to-day. I have somewhere in my possession a photograph of Mr. Tomlinson, but cannot at present lay my hands on it. So far as my memory serves me, the clairvoyant saw it when it was received about four years ago; and her

description of the face and form of the person who appeared to her last Saturday was exceedingly like that of the photograph. She had not, she states, known of his transition on the 6th current, and only casually mentioned his appearance to my wife at the time. His transition may have appeared in the 'Times' and other of the leading papers, but as I only see these at my club, and never look at the obituary column, no intimation reached me of the event; while as regards the clairvoyant, she had probably long since forgotten his existence, and certainly his passing on was an event quite unknown. I give these facts for what they are worth, because they appear to me to support the theory that those who have been *en rapport* with us on earth in 'things spiritual' take the earliest opportunity of demonstrating their continued and sentient existence after reaching another sphere. Many similar instances have occurred in my experience; but this, the most recent, is I think worthy of notice in the columns of a paper to which Mr. Tomlinson was so frequently an able and instructive contributor.

February 18th.

AN 'OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

A Remarkable Cure.

SIR,—For some years I have been very interested in Spiritualism, and have had the opportunity of investigating the subject to a considerable extent. A recent experience, however, from among several somewhat similar, but perhaps not quite so striking, I feel would be of interest to your readers, and ought to be chronicled.

About six months ago an elderly lady, whose health had been gradually giving way for some time, was taken seriously ill. Sudden attacks of severe pain would come on periodically, accompanied by rigors and vomiting, which, lasting for an hour or two, would leave her utterly exhausted. Two highly qualified medical gentlemen attended the patient, and considered the case most serious. One believed that there was a cyst of the kidney; the other, after very careful examination, could not say positively what the disease was, but thought it might be cancer. They were sure that there was a tumour of some kind, and the latter strongly advised consulting a specialist, as he was afraid that an operation was the only means of prolonging the life. Both felt, however, that it was extremely doubtful whether the patient would survive an operation, on account of heart weakness. They could only give medicine to relieve the pain, and the friends were informed that these attacks would continue with probably increasing severity, and that one might at any time prove fatal.

It was at this point that I wrote asking advice from the old doctor who communicates through Madame Greck. I live more than one hundred miles from London, and my inquiries were all made by letter. Madame Greck has never seen the patient, who is also unaware that she has been treated by a doctor from the other side. When writing I did not describe the symptoms, as I had been desired not to do so, but it was distinctly encouraging to receive a reply that no operation was necessary, and that, given proper treatment, there was no reason why the patient should not live another ten or fifteen years.

More than four months have now elapsed, and the old doctor's instructions have been carefully followed up to the present time. From the moment that this treatment commenced, there has been steady and continued improvement until to-day the lady's health is better than it has been for many years, and there has not been a single recurrence of the pain or other undesirable symptoms which we were led to expect.

'LIGHT' SUSTENTATION FUND.—The Treasurer gratefully acknowledges the receipt of the following contributions:—Colonel Coghill, C.B., £1; T. Hyatt, £1; 'A. B.' (Smethwick), £1; L. Hall, 19s.; Mrs. Rushton, 10s. 6d.

MR. R. DONALDSON will oblige by sending us his address, or by calling at our office, as we have an important communication for him.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mr. W. H. Terry, Austral Buildings, Collins-street, E.

SOCIETY WORK.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Catto gave a reading concerning spiritual spheres. Mr. Brenchley spoke on 'Life in the Spirit World.' The meetings which have been held in this hall are now suspended until a more convenient place can be obtained.—C. D. CATTO.

MERTHYR SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CENTRAL HALL, MERTHYR TYDFIL (WALES).—On Sunday afternoon and evening last Miss Rowan Vincent (London) delivered two addresses, entitled 'Where are the Dead?' and 'The Spirit of the Century,' followed by clairvoyance. On this occasion again we had large and appreciative audiences. Miss Vincent is quite a favourite with the Merthyr people. Next Sunday, at 2.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m., Miss Vincent will again occupy our platform.—W.M.H.

LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' CONFERENCE.—The first annual meeting and social gathering will be held at the Workman's Hall, Stratford, on Saturday, March 4th, when the secretary will give a report of the year's progress and introduce plans for future work. On Sunday, March 5th, an open-air meeting will be held in The Grove, Stratford, to commence at 11 a.m. In the afternoon, at 3, in the Workman's Hall, Stratford, Mr. H. Boddington will read a paper, subject, 'Ways and Means: How to Form a Teachers' Guild.' In the evening a meeting will be held in the Workman's Hall, when several speakers attending the Conference will give short addresses.—M. CLEGG.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last a crowded audience assembled at these Rooms. Mr. Bibbings delivered an address on 'Natural Religion: Its Credentials and Service.' The subject was treated with great ability, and many were the epigrammatic utterances of the speaker, well calculated to sink deeply into the minds of all present, imparting useful knowledge and stirring up a spirit of inquiry. The address was brought to a brilliant conclusion by a peroration of remarkable fitness and power. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. H. Phillips, of Nottingham, trance address, 'The Great Unrest.' We hope a large audience will welcome this capable speaker.—L. H.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—The entertainment and dance given on the 15th inst. proved a very successful event, fully two hundred friends being present. Our many friends who supported us have our best thanks and gratitude. On Sunday last Mr. Peters gave a good address, followed by clairvoyance; nineteen descriptions were given, of which fifteen were recognised. Sunday next 'Evangel' will give an address, followed by Mr. J. A. White, who will give clairvoyance. On Monday, at 8 p.m., circle at 51, Bouverie-road. March 5th, address by Mr. T. Everitt.—A. CLEGG, Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday morning last we had a large audience, many strangers being present. At our evening meeting Mr. Beel spoke on 'The Church and Science.' On Sunday morning next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 3 p.m., children's Sunday-school; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. Beel on 'Spiritual Gifts and their Use.' On Sunday, March 12th, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long will give an address on 'The Church of the Spirit.' After the address a general meeting of members will be held to decide on the new plan of work. All members are earnestly requested to attend. Copies of the plan can be obtained from the secretary at the close of each service.—VERAX.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—Mrs. Russell-Davies, in addressing a crowded meeting on Sunday evening, laid special stress upon the fact that, although there is no 'royal road' to mediumship, personal communion with the spirit world is possible to everyone who will afford the necessary conditions. Dealing with the question of the age of Spiritualism and Mr. Frank Podmore's reference thereto at a recent meeting of the Sesame Club, the lecturer demonstrated that Spiritualism was the basis of every religious system in the world, and argued that as it is the science of life it must of necessity have been co-existent with the human race. On the motion of the president (Mr. Kinsman) the meeting accorded Mrs. Russell-Davies a very hearty vote of thanks for her exceedingly interesting and instructive address. Next Sunday's address will be delivered by a member of the society. Wednesday, at 8 p.m., circle for members at 233, Clapton High-road.—J.K.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS will hold its First Annual Concert and Dance on Wednesday, March 1st, 1899, at Youen's Assembly Rooms, Mare-street, Hackney (near London Fields Station, G.E.R.). Admission free by ticket, to be had of the Secretaries of London Societies. Silver collection in aid of the Society.